



The Office of the Commissioner of Probation's

ACROSS THE COMMONWEALTH

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Points

of

Interest:

There are **1,736** individuals being monitored by Electronic Bracelet: **928** on GPS (Global Positioning Satellite) and **808** on Radio Frequency (RF).

- The Interstate Compact Unit of the Office of the Commissioner of Probation (OCP) orchestrated the return of 54 violent, high-risk offenders.
- Several Probation employees saved the lives or came to the aid of an individual in distress while not on the job (read the upcoming "Probation Heroes" piece to be posted on the Trial Court website).

PROBATION ENTERS 2009
WITH TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES

From new technology to the development of programs by Probation Officers to address issues faced by offenders to stepped-up community supervision efforts, 2008 proved to be a novel year for the Massachusetts Probation Service.

In fact, the changes made in the past year are expected to have a huge and lasting impact on crime prevention and offender rehabilitation in 2009 and beyond.

One of the biggest technological advances is Probation's Crime Scene Correlation in which the Office of the Commissioner of Probation provides invaluable intelligence information on criminal activity to the Boston Police Department.

Probation, through the use of the GPS (Global Positioning Satellite) system, is able to trace a crime such as a shooting, stabbing, robbery, rape, or murder to an individual suspect or suspects within one to three meters or within steps of where the crime was committed.

This technology, on the other hand, also enables Probation to eliminate an offender as a suspect. The Crime Scene Correlation (CSC) only tracks high-risk, violent offenders who are on the



GPS Tracking map.

GPS bracelet. The CSC provides the offender's name and address, the tracking device identification, distance from crime location, as well as arrival and departure times at crime scene.

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PROBATION EMPLOYEES WERE IN THE GIVING
SPIRIT THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

Somerville District Court Probation Department and court staff pose with gifts donated to struggling families and children. Included in the photo are Honorable Maurice R. Flynn, Clerk Magistrate Robert Tomasone, First Assistant Clerk Magistrate Bill Farrell, Chief Probation Officer Richard Antonelli, First Assistant Chief Probation Officer Maureen McEachern, Probation Officer Linda Donovan, Probation Officer Maureen McCole, Probation Officer Manager Eileen O'Brien, Probation Office Supervisor Theresa McConaghy, and Probation Case Specialists Kelly Nassif, Catherine Dawson, and Lourdes White.

Probation employees across the Commonwealth were engaged in a variety of holiday charity efforts which helped to make the season brighter for underprivileged children and families during these hard economic times.

A number of Probation Departments participated in the Department of Children and Families' Adopt-A-Family Program where benefactors are given a gift wish list from a family receiving services from the DCF. Other Probation Departments gifted families through

local charity drives run by the Salvation Army, a food pantry, and several other community organizations.

Southern Berkshire District Court Probation staff decided to forgo their annual office gift exchange and instead donated gift cards to the John S. Watson Fund in Great Barrington.

The Fund, established during the depression in honor of Berkshire Eagle Newspaper Bureau Chief John S. Watson, supplies needy families with food and household items as well as clothing for children.

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"You will find the most-up-to-date information available on our agency such as important court statistics," said

Commissioner

John J. O'Brien



LETTER FROM THE COMMISSIONER



Dear Readers:

I would like to introduce to you "Across the Commonwealth," a monthly, online publication which will highlight the programs, initiatives and trends of the Massachusetts Probation Service, Office of Community Corrections, and the Massachusetts Trial Court Community Service Program.

Each month, you will find the most up-to-date information available on our agency such as important court statistics; news on Probation partnerships; and features on Probation-established programs designed to not only help offenders but improve the lives of their families.

We welcome the submission of story ideas and encourage you to share your thoughts.

Thank you and happy reading.

Sincerely,

John J. O'Brien,
Commissioner of Probation

STATE'S FIRST COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS CENTERS OPENED A DECADE AGO

The Springfield Community Corrections Center was one of the first community corrections centers in the Commonwealth to open its doors 10 years ago. Centers also opened in Fitchburg and Barnstable.

Over the past decade, 26 Community Corrections Centers (CCC) have been established in just about every county in the Commonwealth, with the most recent centers opening in Dartmouth and Belchertown in 2008.

When the centers opened in 1998, the idea of a one-stop facility—which combined sanctions and services as an alternative to incarceration—was a new concept. While Sheriffs' Offices in Springfield and Lawrence operated Day Reporting Centers, CCC's were designed to meet the educational, clinical, and rehabilitative needs of offenders.

"Ten years ago the concept of a community corrections centers was fairly new. Today, community corrections centers have become an effective alternative to incarceration helping to reduce new commitments to our county prisons. The centers have helped hundreds of individuals improve their lives through substance abuse treatment, education and job development while saving the state millions over the cost of incarceration," said Stephen V. Price, Executive Director of the Office of Community Corrections. "All of this is possible thanks to the dedicated collaboration of criminal justice professionals across the Commonwealth."

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Clients attend educational session at a Community Corrections Center.

TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES

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The use of the Sobriotor as a tool in child custody and visitation battles was also introduced in Probate & Family Court Probation Departments.

Probation Officers in the Probate & Family Court Probation Departments may now use the Sobriotor, a device to monitor alcohol consumption, to gather information on an individual's fitness as a parent.

"Judges are often faced with difficult decisions on whether to approve or deny visitation or custody when a parent is alleged to have an alcohol problem," said Rick O'Neil, Regional Administrator for the Probate & Family Court in the Office of the Commissioner of Probation.

"When utilizing the Sobriotor, the court can immediately determine whether alcohol is being consumed during visits by random testing and take appropriate action when there is a positive test result. The equipment also provides the court with empirical data to assist

judges in making future decisions that impact the safety and well-being of children."

Another technological advancement in the Massachusetts Probation Service is the introduction of the newly enhanced Interstate Compact Offender Tracking System (ICOTS). Probation became a pivotal member of the new, national tracking system which enables Probation Officers to track the status of probationers whose probation has been transferred to another state.

This computerized tracking system streamlines the transfer process and employs a strict timeline for the completion of the transfer of an offender's probation to another state.

By utilizing another technological tool, LPPolice.com, an Assistant Chief Probation Officer and Probation Office Manager from Gloucester District Court were able to track down a woman owed restitution thanks to a Probation training offered at the Massachusetts Probation Service Training Academy.

When Assistant Chief Arthur Robbins returned to the court after a presentation on LPPolice.com—a subscription-only website which features an individual's name, addresses he or she is associated with, as well as the names of their family members—he shared his knowledge with Probation Office Manager Joanne Curcuru.

Curcuru thought the technology would aid her in tracking down an 82-year-old robbery victim, a Gloucester native who now resides with her son in Florida.

Richard MacNeil, the woman's son, said by phone from Florida that he never thought that his mother, whom he says suffers with dementia, would ever receive "a dime of the money." MacNeil's mother received a \$1,225 check towards the \$6,800 balance she is owed.

Probation also introduced new cutting-edge substance abuse testing equipment.

This alcohol-testing apparatus, called the FST (Field Sobriety Test) Intoximeter, includes features that can detect alcohol use and pinpoint the individual or individuals who have imbibed by holding the equipment just six inches away from the subject or subjects.

This new drug testing equipment is durable and compact.

While the Massachusetts Probation Service has been lauded for its community supervision work, Probation Officers increased their efforts even further. These efforts ranged from Probation Officers removing firearms from the streets to Probation Officers being first responders to a shooting scene.

Teams of Probation Officers have brought community policing to community festivals and events that have been marred by violence.

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PROBATION'S GIVING SPIRIT

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Last year, the probation department was one of several groups and organizations which aided 847 individuals and families, according to Chief Probation Officer Alfred Barbalunga.

"The goal is to provide gifts for 950 recipients in Great Barrington and the 14 surrounding towns," Barbalunga said.

Probation staff at Northern Berkshire District Court purchased items for the American Red Cross "Support Our Troops Program." Probation Officer Lisa A. Denault-Viale coordinated the court's efforts to support the troops.

"We bought snacks, card games and other items for our troops serving in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Kuwait as part of the Red Cross program," said Denault-Viale. "This hit home for everyone. Everyone could relate. We all have friends and family serving our country."

In Bristol County, New Bedford District Court probation staff adopted a local family—a mother and her two children—a four-year-old girl and an eight-year-old boy. The office was provided a Wish List for this family by the Salvation Army. Staff fulfilled the family's wishes for toys, clothing, and food, according to Chief Probation Officer Barry Williams.

For the past 20 years, Taunton District Court Assistant Chief Probation Officer Ken Pacheco has coordinated the holiday drive to support Our Daily Bread Soup Kitchen, run by the St. Thomas Episcopal Church. The soup kitchen provides one meal a day and sends diners home with a bag of non-perishable food.

Bristol County Superior Court Probation employees assisted Market Ministries which runs a New Bedford-based homeless shelter for men as well as transitional house and meals program which serves food five days a week.



Left to right: Northern Berkshire Chief Probation Officer Michael Urquhart, Probation Officer Jim Trepanier, Associate Probation Officer Jean Tatro; Probation Officer Lisa Denault-Viale; and Probation Case Specialist Theresa McLaughlin

Thanks to the assistance from the court and other organizations, the ministries served Christmas dinner to 200 people, according to Sister Rosellen Gallogly, executive director of Market Ministries.

Bristol County Probate & Family Court Probation Operations Supervisor Gloria Arruda coordinated a holiday initiative which benefited the Harbour House Family Shelter in New Bedford. Through this project, the court provided grocery store gift cards to shelter residents.

In Essex County, Haverhill District Court participated in the Adopt-A-Family Program, a DCF initiative. This year, the staff provided a mother and her five-year-old daughter with pajamas, books, dolls, arts and crafts, toys and gift certificates from Market Basket and Kohls, a department store.

Franklin/Hampshire Juvenile Court Probation staff purchased gifts for two older teens in independent living through DCF. Gift cards, clothing, boots, and bedding were among the gifts provided by the staff. The court has participated in this drive since 1996.

In Franklin Probate and Family Court, Probation employees—for the fourth year in a row—provided holiday joy to several families through DCF's Adopt-A-Family Program.

This year, the wish lists of three young families and a teenage girl were fulfilled. Probation staff members purchased an MP3 player, a Dora the Explorer chair, stuffed animals, and clothing.

For the past decade, employees at the Hampshire Probate and Family Court have assisted the DCF's Adopt-A-Family. This year, they fulfilled the wishes of older teens.

"When most people think of Christmas, they think of young children. We wanted to bring a little joy to the adolescents and young adult population," Chief Probation Officer Pamela Eldridge said.

In Middlesex County, district courts in Cambridge, Newton, Somerville, and Woburn participated in holiday projects or sponsored a holiday dinner.

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Chief Probation Officer

Pamela Eldridge.

OCC DECADE

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Massachusetts was one of the first states to create CCC's whose services are specifically designed for women and juveniles. Currently, the Community Corrections Centers accept both male and female clients. There is a women's CCC in Suffolk County as well as three Juvenile Resource Centers, CCC's for male juveniles, in Brockton, New Bedford and Boston. The women's centers feature such programs as women's health and self-esteem seminars; life skills training; and conflict resolution.

It has been estimated that 31,600 have benefited from the services of the centers since they were first introduced a decade ago. The Massachusetts Trial Court Community Service Program falls under the umbrella of OCC. During Calendar Year 2008, offenders throughout the state performed 459,999 hours of community service, according to community service statistics.

Over the past year, 116,302 offenders have been dispatched to community service worksites where they have performed projects that range from traditional community service projects such as highway clean-up, landscaping, and snow removal to less traditional projects—including painting murals and working at a sanctuary for abused animals.

PROBATION'S GIVING SPIRIT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

The Middlesex Probate and Family Court, led by a Probation Officer who was inspired by an article in a local newspaper, created its own program to help three families in need.

Cambridge Probation and Community Corrections staff has helped host the annual Thanksgiving dinner for local senior citizens for the past ten years. Probation employees served 130 people a meal. On hand to serve the meal were Assistant Chief Probation Officer Ron Layne, Assistant Chief Probation Officer Tim Kelleher; Probation Officer Katherine Seoane; and Probation Officer in Charge (POIC) Frank Murphy of the Cambridge OCC.

Newton District Court Chief Probation Officer Kevin Galligan and his staff donated gifts to the Toys for Tots initiative run by the state police. Galligan delivered several boxes of toys to the State Police's Weston barracks. Galligan's department also coordinated a turkey give-away at Thanksgiving. The staff bought 14 turkeys from a local supermarket and donated them to the Bristol Lodge Program of Waltham, a food pantry; the Hellenic Gospel Church in Newton; and to several needy families in the Newton Public Schools.

The Somerville District Court Probation Department collaborates with the Clerk's Office and Judge Maurice Flynn who set-up a Giving Tree which is adorned with the wish lists of 25 local children in DCF custody.

This year, the Somerville Court team fulfilled the wishes of the children who asked for basketballs, soccer balls, arts and crafts kits, dolls, and gift cards. This group has donated more than 200 gifts to children in DCF care over the past six years, according to Somerville District Court Chief Probation Officer Richard J. Antonelli.

Woburn District Court Probation staff participated in three different efforts.

For the past eight years, probation staff has participated in the toy drive for the Woburn Council of Social Concern, a human services agency. The Council forwards the department a listing of toy requests for local children which are then posted on paper snowflakes in the Probation Department.

Woburn staff members also contributed to Thanksgiving and Christmas food drives run by the Council as well as the local Toys for Tots drive.

Middlesex Probate & Family Court Probation Officer Edwin "Ted" Welch asked his colleagues to join him in creating a Holiday drive for needy families, including single parents and grandparents raising grandchildren.



Northern Berkshire District Court Probation Staff. Back, left to right: Chief Probation Officer Alfred Barbalunga and Probation Officers Clifford Flynn and Michael Duma. Seated, left to right are Probation Case Specialist Deborah Cook; Account Clerk Lisa Balestro; and Associate Probation Officer Brooke Storti.

Welch, Assistant Chief Probation Officer Anne C. Gallagher, and Probation Officer Amanda Izzo-Nicoletti selected three families in need, according to Welch.

"These families were not asking for the traditional Christmas lists containing Xbox, computers, iPods, or the newest video games," Welch said. "Instead, they were asking for help with daily essentials such as diapers, clothing, and one of the families chosen even said 'any assistance is appreciated' with no items listed."

The Middlesex Probate & Family Court Probation Department helps children and families everyday by addressing issues ranging in custody, divorce, visitation, and child support.

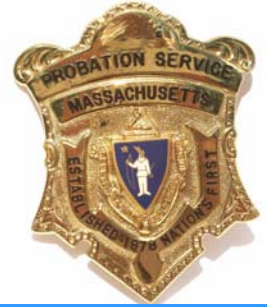
"This is just another example of how just going that extra mile can make a big difference in the life of a child and the family," said Chief Probation Officer Sophia O'Brien

In Worcester County, Gardner District Court Probation staff provided gift certificates which they placed in food baskets and distributed to the local Community Action Center (CAC) at Thanksgiving and Christmas time.

The baskets included groceries, according to Gardner District Court Chief Probation Officer Henry Culver.

"Times are tough for a lot of people and we are glad to be in a position to help out," said Culver.

Across the Commonwealth Story Submission Form



Across the Commonwealth is a monthly online publication which features statewide probation initiatives, events, and trends in the Massachusetts Probation Service, Community Corrections Centers and Community Service.

Story Subject:

Contact Person or Persons:

Court/Department: _____ Fax: _____
Email: _____

Description of Story:

(Please remember to include all of the details and make sure your description explains the "who, what, where, why, when and how" of the story).

Any Photos?: ☐Yes or ☐No.

Email or mail Story submissions and photos to:

Coria Holland, Communications Director
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THANK YOU

**A confirmation of your story submission will be sent to you upon receipt of the form.
Do you prefer to receive it via ☐fax: _____ or ☐email _____

Probation Snapshots



Probation Officer controls crowd at game as part of Probation's PEACE (Probation Enhancing Athletic Climate Excellence) Partnership Community Probation Initiative.



Essex County Juvenile Court Probation Officer Kristen Daly interacts with teen mom and her baby at Mothers Helping Mothers Program.



Offenders perform community service at Ponkapoag Golf Course.



Chief Probation Officer Joel West and Assistant Chief Probation Officer Kenneth J. Pacheco demonstrate CPR during training at Clinton Academy. Chief Probation Officer/ Instructor Dan Ryan (seated) observes.



Somerville District Court Probation Officer Damon Banks coaches young woman at local boxing club.



Criminal justice and human services professionals attend Woburn District Court Probation Department's 2008 HEAT (Heroin Education Awareness Task) Force Program.

**Office of the Commissioner
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and then click on **Probation**.

***The Massachusetts
Probation Service:
A Legacy of Justice***

***Coming Up in the
February 2009 Issue:***

Motivational Interviewing.

ICOTS (Interstate Compact)
Update.

Probation employees who coach
youth sports.

Calendar Year 2008 Probation
Statistics.

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monthly publication of the Office of
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sachusetts Probation Service, the
Office of Community Corrections
and the Massachusetts Trial Court
Community Service Program.

Please forward photos, story
ideas, and/or comments to:

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Another group of Probation Officers routinely monitor offenders and maintain a presence in identified trouble spots such as night-clubs, community parks, and shopping areas.

On Halloween, Probation Officers protected trick or treaters by keeping a watchful eye on sex offenders. It was "Lights Out" for sex offenders in Fall River and surrounding towns Halloween night when Fall River District Court Probation Offi-

cers made surprise visits to the homes of nearly 30 probationers to ensure that they were not distributing candy to children or having contact with anyone 16 years old or younger. Another team of Probation Officers joined Salem Police during Halloween festivities at Salem's annual Haunted Happenings, the site of the largest Halloween celebration in the region.

In 2008, the Commissioner of Probation and the Office of the Community Corrections held its first Kevin P. Duggan Hockey Championship to honor the memory of the Community Service Statewide Supervisor who passed away in June 2006. Duggan's family members, friends, and colleagues engaged in one of his biggest passions: hockey. The group converged at Murphy's Skating Rink in South Boston where two teams, one representing the Office of the Commissioner of Probation (OCP) and the other from the Office of Community Corrections (OCC), suited up and took to the ice where they competed for the Kevin P. Duggan Championship Cup. The 2009 game is scheduled to take place in March.

Over the past year, Probation Officers introduced new programs or added a twist or new approach to existing programs.

A Bristol County Probate & Family Court Probation Officer Edward Woods, based on an idea of former Suffolk County Assistant Chief Probation Officer Victor Melendez, brought to fruition "Life 101: A Lesson in Reality," an hour and a half interactive presentation for teenagers at local high schools. "Life 101" teaches students about Probate & Family Court Probation and the resources offered through the Probation Department. Among the topics emphasized in the session are paternity, divorce, guardianship, custody child support, and restraining orders. Also taught in the seminar is "Financial Reality," which demonstrates to teens the amount of child support a parent, earning minimum wage, must pay.

Another new program added to the Probation programs roster was Mothers Helping Mothers in Essex County. Probation Officers, who also happen to be mothers, run the program which was developed to enhance the parenting skills of teenage mothers. Mothers Helping Mothers was created by Essex County Juvenile Court First Assistant Chief Probation Officer Carol Joyce Clark, a mother of two. "Mothers helping Mothers builds new roads between the community, agencies, and the court," said Clark, a 30-year Probation employee.

TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES



Suffolk County Probation Officers maintain a presence at Downtown Crossing in Boston and later traverse the Boston Common and Chinatown.

Left to right: Assistant Chief Probation Officer Michelle Williams, BMC-Roxbury; Probation Officer Lucinda Matos-Rodrigues, BMC-West Roxbury; First Assistant Chief Probation Officer Jocelyn I Covington, BMC-Roxbury; Probation Officer II Adita Vazquez, BMC-West Roxbury; and intern Christina Gatej, a recent Northeastern University graduate.